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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 7826th meeting of the Security Council, held on 5 December 2016, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"Following the visit of the Security Council to the Democratic Republic of Congo from 11 to 13 November, the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council, regarding the situation in the country:

"The Security Council is monitoring very closely the recent political development in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and remains concerned about the risk for destabilization of the country and the region as a whole, as illustrated by the violence of 19-20 September 2016, in the absence of a swift and consensual resolution to the current political crisis.

"The Security Council thanks the Government of the DRC, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and all its interlocutors for the fruitful discussions that have taken place during this visit.

"The Security Council acknowledges the political agreement reached on 18 October 2016, and takes note of the appointment of the new prime minister. The Security Council is encouraged by the unanimous commitment of Congolese actors to prevent destabilization and to continue inclusive discussions in order to reach a broad consensus towards free, fair, credible, inclusive, transparent, peaceful and timely presidential and legislative elections leading to a peaceful transfer of power, in accordance with the Congolese Constitution, for the stability, development and consolidation of constitutional democracy in the DRC. The Security Council further calls on political groups that did not sign the political agreement to remain engaged in dialogue. The Security Council welcomes commitments to respect and preserve the constitution in letter and spirit and looks forward to the implementation of further confidence building measures to ease tensions and build consensus.

"The Security Council welcomes the ongoing mediation efforts led by the Conférence épiscopale Nationale du Congo (CENCO) and calls on all

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political actors to continue working in good faith and in a spirit of compromise towards a swift political solution, before 19 December 2016, that paves the way for peaceful, credible, inclusive and timely elections as soon as possible in the DRC. The Security Council further encourages the region to pursue its efforts in support of the mediation.

"The Security Council urges the government as well as all relevant parties to ensure an environment conducive to a free, fair, credible, inclusive, transparent elections, as recalled in Security Council resolution 2277 (2016), which includes free and constructive political debate, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly, equitable access to media including State media, safety and freedom of movement for all candidates, as well as for election observers and witnesses, journalists, human rights defenders and actors from civil society, including women.

"The Security Council calls on the authorities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially the right of peaceful assembly, and to exercise maximum restraint in their response to protests, and also calls upon the opposition forces, on their side, to show responsibility by ensuring the peaceful character of their demonstrations.

"The Security Council reiterates its call upon all political parties, their supporters, and other political actors to exercise maximum restraint in their actions and statements, to refrain from violence, violent speeches or other provocations and to address their differences peacefully. The Security Council calls on the Government of the DRC to hold accountable those responsible for the killings on 19-20 September 2016 and all violations and abuses of human rights. The Security Council takes note of the recent visit to DRC of the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

"The Security Council stresses the importance for the Government of the DRC and its national partners to take all steps to accelerate preparations for the elections without further delays, including by expediting the update of the voter registry.

"The Security Council is also deeply concerned by the humanitarian situation that continues to severely affect the civilian population in eastern DRC and the persistence of violence in eastern DRC, in particular in North Kivu Province where nearly 840,000 people were internally displaced as of September 30, 2016 and more than 700 civilians have been killed since October 2014. The Security Council urges authorities to hold accountable those deemed responsible for the violence.

"The Security Council calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to take further action, in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as applicable, and with the support of MONUSCO in accordance with its mandate, to end the threat posed by the ADF, the FDLR and all other armed groups operating in the DRC. The Security Council encourages further cooperation between the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and MONUSCO in tackling this violence and their efforts to neutralize armed groups operating in Eastern Congo.

"The Security Council reiterates its full support to MONUSCO and its appreciation for the Special Representative's leadership in trying to ease tensions. The Security Council urges MONUSCO to fully implement its protection of civilians mandate, including to respond to current and ongoing security threats and reminds troop and police contributing countries of the need for a comprehensive approach and to take all necessary measures to carry out MONUSCO's mandate as set forth in resolution 2277.

"The Security Council welcomes the regional initiatives and efforts by regional states to promote peace, stability and democracy in the DRC, to enhance cooperation towards the neutralization of armed groups in eastern DRC, including the establishment by the DRC, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda of a Joint Follow-up Mechanism, and encourages further action. The Security Council extends its thanks to Angola, chair of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), for the fruitful discussions held in Luanda on 14 November 2016. The Security Council also welcomes in that regard the reform of the governing mechanisms of the PSC Framework, including the decision to hold one annual high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism in a signatory State, with a view to strengthening regional ownership of the framework.

"The Security Council expresses its determination to continue to closely follow the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the security conditions on the ground and the efforts to successfully conclude the electoral process."